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homemakers' chat

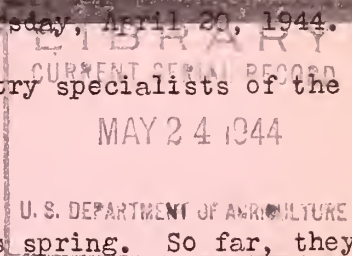
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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

Thursday, April 20, 1944.

Subject: "EGGS FOR NEXT WINTER." Information from poultry specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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Our American hens have been doing an extra good job this spring. So far, they

have produced about 80 percent more eggs than we had in the 10-year period through 1942. Every hen seems to be laying more eggs than hens ever laid before.

We're told we need one out of every four eggs the hens lay for drying and sending overseas for our armed forces, and for use by our allies and other friendly nations. The other three-fourths of the total supply amounts to three and a half billion dozen ---or about 350 eggs for each civilian here at home in 1944. That's practically an egg a day---more eggs than Americans have ever had before in history.

Of course, all these eggs will be spread out over the whole year of 1944. But it's the habit of hens to lay most heavily in the spring-time, and right now they are laying a lot more eggs than they will lay next fall. So some housewives are taking advantage of this plentiful supply to preserve some of the eggs they gather now from the home flock, or buy from a reliable dealer who can guarantee freshness. There are four possible ways, of preserving eggs at home for cooking use next fall.

The method you choose for preserving eggs depends on whether or not you have a cool cellar or some other good storage place for the containers, also on the preserving substances you can get conveniently. Poultry specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture say that putting eggs down in waterglass is still a good home method of preserving them. Or you can coat the eggs with mineral oil, or seal them in a jar filled with melted "dry ice". Or break them and put the liquid eggs into a freezer locker.

If you can possibly put away even a few dozen extra eggs now by one of these

methods, you'll find plenty of uses for them next winter. Eggs are always a good alternate for meat, and you can count on your waterglass crock or freezer-locker store any time you're short of ration points or the storekeeper is short on his meat supply. And don't forget the eggs you'll need for pumpkin pie next Thanks-giving!

You know, of course, that it doesn't pay to preserve any but infertile eggs by any method. Most commercial eggs are infertile. Eggs must also be as fresh as possible---preferably not over 24 hours old. They should have clean, strong, sound shells, or they will not keep.

Both waterglass and mineral oil preserve eggs by sealing the pores in the shells. Dry ice gives off carbon dioxide gas, which is used for preserving various things. If you seal eggs in a jar filled with the fumes of melted dry ice they will keep well for months. You can probably get dry ice at a nearby ice cream plant. And if you have no place at home to store eggs preserved in any of these three ways---in waterglass, mineral oil, or dry ice---maybe you have space in a freezer-locker plant where you can store them frozen.

Now for a few details about the four methods. The poultry specialist supplies the various directions.

For the waterglass method, you need a 5-gallon crock or galvanized can for each 14 to 15 dozen eggs. Clean the crock or can thoroughly, and set it where you intend to keep it. Any moving might break some of the eggs, and a broken egg would spoil the whole batch. Mix nine quarts of boiled, cooled water and one quart of waterglass or sodium silicate, right in the crock. Put eggs into this solution whenever you have fresh ones. Set the eggs down very carefully so as not to crack the shells. Stop adding eggs when the solution is one inch above the last layer, and start a new jar or crock, if you want to preserve still more eggs. If the solution evaporates so there is less than an inch of it above the eggs, add some more, mixed in the same proportions---nine parts of boiled water to one part of waterglass. Cover the crock to prevent evaporation. And remember that when you

want to boil an egg that has been in waterglass solution, you should prick the shell with a pin, or the egg may explode in hot water because the pores are sealed.

For dipping eggs in mineral oil, use the lightest grade oil the drug store carries. Heavy oil makes the shell greasy and collects dust. Warm the oil to thin it, but only to lukewarm temperature that your hand can stand comfortably. Eggs keep best when you oil them the day they are gathered, but about four hours after they are laid. Put several eggs in a wire basket, dip the basket down into the warm oil, drain, and then pack the eggs in clean baskets, crates, or cases, in a cool cellar. They will keep for several months.

If you want to try the dry ice method, the government poultry specialists warn you to handle dry ice with care, or it may hurt your skin or even cause an explosion. Always use tongs or paper to handle dry ice. It isn't advisable to try to store eggs in anything smaller than a 2-quart glass fruit jar. The jar must have a rubber ring and a screw top. Adjust the rings on clean jars, and then, using the tongs, drop two pieces of dry ice about the size of walnuts into each jar. Then immediately put as many eggs into each jar as it will hold. When the ice stops fuming and the jar is filled with white vapor, screw the top on tight and set the jar away in a cool place. Once the jar is opened, use the eggs within a few days.

Because of their cracking when frozen, you can't store eggs in the shell in a freezer locker. So you break them and churn them up a little to prevent the yolks from being gummy when thawed. Add 1 teaspoonful of salt for each 2 cups of whole egg meats. Don't stir vigorously enough to whip much air into the yolks. For custard eggs, you can use a tablespoonful of sirup or honey instead of the salt. You may prefer to freeze whites and yolks separately. Prepare the yolks the same as whole eggs, with salt or sirup and some churning. Whites don't need anything added and they are not churned. Pack in moisture-vapor-proof paper cartons or tight baking powder cans small enough so you can use the eggs up promptly after they come out of storage.

